

Yarlington Parish Annual Report Year 2022-2023.

1. Introduction

Post Covid, Yarlington like so many communities large and small, has been taking positive strides towards normality. As a caring community it has supported and enabled each person to reintegrate and engage with activities at a pace, they felt happy with no matter what their age, state of health and well-being or their confidence in situations after such a difficult two years. The opening up of the Village Hall also saw the Village Hall Committee working hard on behalf of the wider community to secure funding for an awning to create a larger open space in addition to the plans to upgrade the Halls facilities; to include a catering kitchen, improved cloakroom and an uplift of the general fabric of the building. These have all been positive steps that have supported our community now and will protect it for the future.

2. Community

A sense of community underpins the quintessentially English village. The last twelve months have seen national celebrations for the Queens Platinum Jubilee and the mourning of her passing, both were heart felt by our community like so many. A sense of pride, of belonging, the ability to empathise with others and all things that symbolise our heritage were and are evident and embraced in Yarlington then and on a daily basis. This is what makes Yarlington and village communities like it so special, something that cannot be bottled but instead must be cherished and encouraged to thrive and be celebrated in its wider community.

Communities are made up of people and each has the chance to make a valuable contribution to the bigger picture. With this in mind it is important to acknowledge, and thank those who have served this community and to wish them well in their retirement from the council. On behalf of Yarlington I would like to thank Malcolm Hunt for his many years of service on the council and for his guiding hand as Chair. Similarly, I would like to thank Bryan Mead for his commitment and service to Yarlington on the council and in a broader sense for the friendship of Bryan and his wife Gladys, they will be greatly missed by all the residents of Yarlington. This means seats around the Parish Council table remain empty and an opportunity exists for members of this special community to think about stepping up to play their part as custodians, preserving while enabling this community to be recognised and to flourish in the future.

Sadly, this year the community has seen the passing of some of its parishioners including Phyllis Amor and Paul Hallam. Our thoughts are with both families and their friends, we share in their loss at this time and similarly are thoughts are with all who may have endured losses in their lives this year and during and post the pandemic.

Recently, we have seen the younger generation playing its part in village life. Following on from the Men in Black, a hard act to follow - Molly Maidment has captured the hearts of the local community with her Saturday breakfasts. We wish her every success with her fund raising for Kenya and look forward to hearing about her trip next year.

3. Infrastructure.

The village though small is served by a number of roads. The majority are single track which reflects the historic level of traffic, the size and weight of the vehicles and the frequency of journeys. In the last year the state of the roads, the verges and the general amount of traffic has given cause for concern to the residents of the village and moving forward with work about to commence at Yarlinton Lodge, all parties will need to be prepared to communicate and act in the interests of all concerned.

During March /April 2023 some may have noticed Walters Vehicles and their workforce in the village. They were clearing watercourses, checking walls and bridges to facilitate surveys on the structures with a view to creating reports and if appropriate any necessary remedial works. This took place in addition to the rolling programme of reporting potholes and the general state of the roads which happens on a monthly basis by local Councillor John Rundle, are thanks to him for all his work and are thanks to local residents for playing their part in reporting problems.

The width of the roads is now also challenged by the increase size, weight and in some cases frequency of agricultural vehicles using the lanes in and around the village. Many of these lanes have verges and hedgerows that are integral to the biodiversity of the environment and these are under threat. Similarly stretches of these lanes are edged by old walls, some dry-stone others may have minimal cement work. Pound Lane has houses flanking the lane, the road conditions and width now pose a potential problem to the buildings in addition to the potholes and the adverse camber these can create on high sided vehicles.

In each case, all are vulnerable to the sheer size, volume and on occasions speed of traffic that now uses these lanes. As a community we need to work towards preserving these environments and keeping them safe for all vehicles, pedestrians and animals and this is a matter for further dialogue and action in the coming year.

4. Events

Throughout the calendar year, Yarlinton Village has found the energy and appetite to resurrect many of the traditional events that help to define this unique community alongside national celebrations. It has been good to see the church reopen for business as usual and heartened that the Stags Head is beginning to make inroads now reopening two/three days a week. We look forward to when it is once again able to become a hub of the village throughout the week. Many of these events have raised money some to support the Village Hall, the Church and other charitable organisations. It is testimony to the residents of Yarlinton with its predominantly Saga aged demographic that they find the energy and determination to organise and run so many events that benefit the village and wider communities.

The list includes

- Supporting local food bank
- Plant Fair
- Queens Platinum Jubilee

- Open Gardens
- The Opera @Yarlington House
- Cider Group
- Shatwell Farm Events
- Harvest Festival
- 'The nog and natter'
- Molly's Breakfasts
- Life drawing classes amongst others.

On behalf of the village thank you to everybody concerned for their hard work and endeavour and we extend our thanks to Emily Estates for their support at many of these events.

5. Church Report 2023.

At the start of the year Covid was still causing anxieties. Services continued over Easter while we were in Australia for a wedding! The church was decorated with flags, inside and out for the Queens 70th Jubilee Celebrations. The Big Lunch happened in the field adjacent to the church and was well attended.

On the sad death of Her majesty, the Bell in the Church was tolled with others across the Nation for an hour. The 3rd Sunday of the month's service of Evensong was replaced with a Service of Celebration for the life of Queen Elizabeth II.

A Harvest Festival was held on the 16th October and the church was adorned with apples from the year's bumper crops.

The Christmas choir was once again formed, and rehearsals took place at Yarlington and Galhampton Churches, preparing for the first 'live' Choir singing since the start of Covid 2 years ago. The Carol Service was well attended on the 22nd December and had the young soloist, Jerry, performing for the first time, singing 'The Dormouse Carol' as well as starting off with 'Once in Royal David's City'.

We had a couple of Special PCC's to discuss the possibilities for the future, and what the plans for the Camelot Parish will bring. We await what will be decided for us as we adjust to life after our rector, Tristram, retires in August, and the Diocese of Bath and Wells re-arranges everything.....

We are still in the process of getting the floor replace. Easter will be celebrated with an Egg Hunt in the Churchyard before the service in the evening, and some fund-raising plans are being thought of over the Summer.

Provided by Mary-Clare Leavold.

Sec. for the PCC St. Mary's Church, Yarlington

6. Emily Estates

This is the second year that we have reported on the now established working relationship with Emily Estates. To date it has proved to be beneficial to both parties and it is important to maintain this link and to strengthen it in the years to come.

Setting the scene, Emily Estate owns the majority of the land surrounding the centre of the village of Yarlington, the land that extends to The Farmyard@ Shatwell, Avalon Farm @ Galhampton and towards The Toll House and therefore is now very much part of our community.

As you will undoubtedly have noted, 'community' is the buzz word for this Annual Report and in order for communities to exist alongside and in many ways interwoven with each other, it is important that each recognises and values the other. At all times we must strive to understand, support and facilitate the others existence and longevity. It is important to recognise this is not always going to be easy but essential and preferable for all concerned:

First an update on the Developments awaiting Planning Decisions from 2022:

Yarlington Lodge became empty July 2022, when notice was served on the last tenants. Work on the luxury holiday lets for 28 people has not commenced yet due in part to minor changes to the plans and the requirement to satisfy the reduction in phosphates. This has meant delays for planning applications for new housing, businesses or, where like Yarlington Lodge the number of residents on a site has increased.

On site, some preliminary works have taken place including some work on the main drive and the access road from the Barn to Yarlington Lodge parallel to the Ride /Gallop.

Please note The Ride/Gallop remains open to walkers.

Wildlife and Fishing Pond North of Crockers Hill

The field that lies behind the Village Pond is bordered on two sides by two streams, much of the land is in essence a potential wetland. Emily Estates aims to create two ponds in part of the space, a feeder pond and a larger trout pond that will be for the guests at the Newt and the Farmyard. The River Cam will flow through the ponds before continuing its existing path out of the village. We have assurances that the water flow rates will be maintained while works are undertaken and upon completion both upstream as well as through the village. Vegetation will be thinned as required at the appropriate time of year to facilitate the completion of the work

NB The agenda for the meeting that follows on from the Annual Parish Meeting, states planning approval for Yarlington Lodge and the Trout Pond.

On a separate note, it is important to acknowledge other work that has taken place on the **Village Pond, the Paddock and Manor Farm Drive**. Emily Estates have continued to maintain and develop the area, cutting back vegetation, planting and keeping the pond clear, facilitating access through the paddock and the field beyond. This year, ducks and a pair of

Canada Geese are nesting on the island and we await the young. We would also like to thank Emily Estates for allowing access to the Paddock and Village Pond in general and for granting permission for the community to use this area for the forthcoming Fringe and Coronation Celebrations over the next two weekends 28-30 April and 6-8 May 2023.

In conjunction with the **maintenance of the church**, Emily Estates thinned the avenue of trees that line the Manor Farm drive. The church benefits now from more light on the end wall which has undergone some structural work and this will help the wall to dry out while also bringing more natural light into the church.

Manor Farm Consultation

Emily Estates organised a Consultation Presentation over two days 24th and 25th February 2023 at the Stags Head, Yarlington. The event was well attended by residents of the village and the wider community and all were grateful for the opportunity to view the proposed plans at this early stage. While it was valuable to be able to ask questions and express opinions on the day, reflection played an important part in the process. Following on from the Village Hall Committee Meeting 6th March 2023, the village took the opportunity to discuss the presentation in more detail and these findings formed the basis for a meeting with Emily Estates on Tuesday 14 March 2023 @The Farmyard, Shatwell. It is important to stress that no consensus had been reached about the proposed plans and this was presented and discussed as a working document in no particular order highlighting some of the main concerns:

1. Emily Estates had stated that **Manor Farm would remain a working farm**. However, the presentation showed the location of the proposed new farm buildings on a new green field site. The concerns expressed linked to environmental issues – for example light, noise, land pollution, the site location and the, size and scale of the farming unit versus the development of the existing brown field site. Each has some merits and pitfalls, opinion was mixed. It was also noted that the plans no longer included an on-site farm house/farmer in the design and this is the last farm in the centre of the village and potentially another farm lost in this area along with several others also owned by Emily Estates. Many felt this was integral to any development.
2. The **Implications on Access and Traffic Flow** which has increased significantly over the last six months (and covered earlier in the report) to facilitate the movement of feed, bedding and manure to and from Manor Farm with broader ramifications on the village including:
 - Size of agricultural vehicles and the restriction of the lane breadth, verges, hedging, old walls and homes etc
 - Frequency of journeys each day – one day alone 107 journeys long Pound Lane.
 - Speed of traffic on occasions not just agricultural the wider community as well
 - The routes taken by the agricultural vehicles making it difficult for the community to go about their daily business with no one way system in place (this resulted in the decision on the day to send the agricultural traffic up Queen Street wherever possible due to road width) However, concerns that the problem will increase when work commences at Yarlington Lodge and thereafter by holiday traffic alongside Newt

service traffic and the agricultural traffic to the site to maintain pasture, barns, orchards and grounds to and from the Lodge and Manor Farm.

In accordance with the current plan, and the communities concerns about traffic, Emily Estates were in agreement that the inevitable construction traffic required to create the proposed **Residential Housing** and **suggested Manor Farm Holiday Lets** could/would all be accessed from the road leading to Avalon Farm once/if planning permission was granted. However, both the Affordable Housing and the Holiday Lets would bring with them further traffic following construction and this was estimated as

- 23 beds in five units (Manor Farm) 5-10 holiday vehicles +service traffic
- 28 beds in three units (The Lodge) 7-14 holiday vehicles +service traffic
- Residential dwellings the traffic at 2 vehicles per dwelling = 6-8 vehicles
- **Total= 18 – 32 vehicles on Pound Lane and Manor Drive per day with repeated journeys**

When Emily Estates applied for planning permission to develop Yarlington Lodge, it was agreed that the loss of residential housing would need to be addressed: The Proposed Plans for Manor Farm present a barn development consisting of the conversion of the existing stone barns and the removal of the prefab barns creating space for 3/4 residential units. However, this provision would only replace the Yarlington Lodge residential units that have been lost, as agreed at the linked site Planning Meeting and not create a net gain as suggested due to the intent to build further Holiday lets at the farm. This would mean that the proposed number of holiday let beds in the centre of the village would out number residents in the vicinity by approximately 2:1 alongside other existing holiday lets already in situ. Currently seven properties are empty in the village excluding holiday and pub lets properties which are not always in use.

The discussion about **the residential dwellings** was lengthy seeking a definition by Emily Estates determining what they deem to be:

- A viable number of units to support the village
- Dwelling size (s)
- Price
- Target market as it was felt is should extend beyond people who work at the Newt and enable local people to live in their community
- It was implied that this development gave the village a net gain of two properties which remains contentious
- We revisited the dialogue that took place in 2021, concerns that within a five-mile radius of Manor Farm Yarlington, Emily Estates has purchased a number of other properties including several farms in addition to the portfolio held and a number of these properties remain either empty or under change of use.

With this in mind, Yarlington seeks transparency about the intentions of Emily Estates across the wider community to enable the area to understand the bigger picture. The wish that Emily Estates considered when enough is enough, to consider the use and consolidation of the land

and properties already purchased and allowing others to buy and move in the area, securing the future of communities like Yarlinton alongside the business model of Emily Estates.

Each of these points were discussed at length, the dialogue was positive and amicable Emily Estates were receptive to the comments made.

Emily Estates were thanked for facilitating this process of consultation prior to submitting plans, they stated their intent to review the plans in light of all current feedback from a range of sources and a further presentation will take place in due course a date to be confirmed.

Maria Viney